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LOUISE KEELING

FROM BOOK TO SCREEN

A MOVIE PRODUCTION BY FIRST GRADE

Situation—After we had told and dramatized a number of stories, the question came from the class, "What else can we do with a story?" The children decided they would like to make a "movie" from one of the stories. How they developed this idea is told below.

I. *What the Children Did*

A. They made a survey of stories to find the ones best suited for "movies."

1. In doing this they read the following stories:

The Three Bears—*Elson Extension Series, Primer*. Scott Foresman Co., N. Y. The Gingerbread Boy and Wee Wee Woman—*The Winston Readers, Primer*. Jno. C. Winston Co., Phila. The Three Pigs—*Everyday Classics, Primer*. Macmillan Co., N. Y.

2. While the children were preparing their stories, I read or told to them: Little Black Sambo—Bannerman, Fred A. Stokes Co., N. Y.; Peter Rabbit—Potter, Fred Warner & Co.,

N. Y.; *The Little Engine That Could—Elson Extension Series, Book I*, Scott Foresman Co., N. Y.; *The Boy and the Goat—The Winston Readers, Primer*, Jno. C. Winston Co., Phila.; *The Billy Goats Gruff—Everyday Classics, First Reader*, Macmillan Co., N. Y.

3. As each story was read, I listed its title on the blackboard.
4. They dramatized each of the stories in order to note those best suited for a "movie."¹
 - a. Class selected a manager who chose the characters.
 - b. The class arranged the scenes and played the story. After this they discussed ways to improve the play and rehearsed it once more.
- B. They planned a "movie" for each of four stories, namely: Little Black Sambo, Peter Rabbit, Three Billy Goats Gruff, The Three Bears.
 1. Class decided which of the stories dramatized were best for "movies."
 2. They revised the division of scenes made when stories were dramatized, checking particularly on sequence of scenes.
 3. They made appropriate pictures for each scene.
 - a. They decided to use sheets of white paper 18x24 inches and color with crayons.
 - b. They drew and colored pictures of each scene. The children improvised an easel by placing the sheet of paper flat on top of their tables.
 4. They fastened the pictures together.
 - a. They pasted the pictures flat with edges overlapping about one inch. To the first picture, another sheet with the name of the story printed on it was pasted.

- b. They fastened the pictures to a frame so that they could be rolled.²
- C. They planned the program.
 1. Class selected one child to tell the story of each picture as reel was turned.
 2. After class had suggested ways to improve, the child retold the story.
- D. They gave the "movie."
 1. The manager announced name of "movie."
 2. Two children turned the reel as the appointed child told the story of each picture.

II. Values Derived from Making the Movie

A. Skills Strengthened.

1. In silent reading the children gained in power to analyze a story into thought units. This was done both in choosing the scenes and in deciding what were the points to be emphasized in each picture.
2. In fine arts they learned how to use crayons smoothly and how to select pleasing colors for objects and costumes. They also had practice in placing objects in a picture according to their size, importance, and distance.
3. In industrial arts they learned to print carefully. They learned to make the capital letters one space high and small letters one-half space, and to leave the distance between words twice as much as that between letters.

B. Attitudes Encouraged.

1. Coöperation—one child put paste on

¹Dramatizing each of the stories took a good deal of time, but it seemed worth while because it threw the plot of each story into high relief and because it was the children's idea of how to do it.

²To make the frame take three 36-inch pieces of 1¼x1¼-inch boards. Two of the 36-inch uprights of 1¼x1¼-inch are fastened into a base board 2x2-inch, with a third 36-inch of 1¼x1¼-inch across the top. With a nail fasten two round rods (broomsticks will do) about three inches from either end, to the top and bottom of frame so that the rods will turn. Then attach the ends of the roll to the round rods with thumb tacks.

edge of a sheet while a second child placed edge of next sheet over that of the first one.

2. Judgment—class thought a certain scene could be improved and made definite suggestions; children acted this scene again, meeting the suggestions.
3. Leadership—one child arranged the scenes with the help of the cast.

MARY E. DUNCANSON

ATTRACTIVE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

In all Christian nations December is a month when the hands and hearts of grown-ups are attempting to add to the happiness and development of children. Since six years ago when Children's Book Week was instituted, November is also coming to belong to children. Both at Christmas time and during Children's Book Week, teachers, parents, and librarians are thinking of books as gifts to children, and are encouraging the reading of the best books.

American parents give freely to their children whatever money can buy. Small wonder that the writing and publishing of children's books has grown so rapidly in the past few decades. But for every really fine book printed a vast number of worthless juveniles are for sale. The reading tastes of children must be developed so they will enjoy the rich field of literature which was not available to youngsters a century ago. Powerful influences of another character have grown up in our time along with the wealth of opportunity in better schools, more libraries, and books. The comic supplement and jazz-movies reach multitudes of children in whose homes books are not bought or read in the family circle, who attend one-room or small graded schools where libraries do not exist or are poorly selected.

To encourage a child to have a library of

his own wherein he will delight to browse and learn to use his leisure wisely, to assist parents in the selection of good books for their children is the happy opportunity of teachers and librarians. In the too many places where there is no library the teacher is the only one to give this service.

The books mentioned in this article may help teachers in selections for school libraries, as guides for supplementary reading and gifts. These or any other books, regardless of publisher, may be bought from either of the following library jobbers: A. C. McClurg & Company, 333 East Ontario Street, Chicago, Illinois, or G. P. Putnam's Sons, 26 West 45th Street, New York City.

Your own library has some of these books. Write to the secretary of your State library commission for a loan library. Excellent lists of books and helpful publicity material for book promotion can be obtained from the American Library Association, 86 East Randolph Street, Chicago; the Bureau of Education (Home Education Division), Washington, D. C.; and the National Association of Book Publishers, 25 West 33d Street, New York City. Some of the publicity material from the above sources will suggest to teachers how editors of local papers can be interested in promoting better reading and library growth, and how local bookstores can be interested in having a high grade of juvenile reading for sale. The following titles for the eight grades are a few of many selected by children's librarians:

Æsop's *Fables* and Anderson's *Fairy Tales*—so well known that comment is not needed.

Boutet de Monvel's *Joan of Arc*—one of the most beautiful picture books ever published in this country.

Brooke's *Golden Goose Book*, clearly printed, with artistic cover and drawings, full of action and humor.

Caldecott's Picture Books—very clever and amusing picture stories of nursery rhymes in colors.